

**To:** Interested Parties

**From:** Ben LaBolt, White House Communications Director

**Date:** Monday, December 18, 2023

**Re: The Biden-Harris Agenda Delivered Meaningful Progress for Hardworking Americans in 2023**

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When President Biden and Vice President Harris took the oath of office on January 20, 2021, America faced historic challenges including a once-in-a-century pandemic, an economy gripped by the most severe downturn since the Great Depression, and the painful aftermath of the January 6<sup>th</sup> insurrection. The prior administration was the first since President Hoover to exit office with fewer jobs than when they came in.

From Day One, President Biden and Vice President Harris moved swiftly to tackle these challenges head-on. Over the three years since, he has amassed one of the most impactful legislative records in generations, fought to grow our economy by rebuilding the economy from the bottom up and middle out, and delivered the strongest recovery in the developed world. That's resulted in the creation of over 14 million jobs, the revival of America's infrastructure and a manufacturing renaissance, and meaningful wage gains for workers. Inflation has come down two thirds since last summer and consumer confidence is on the rise. The President also understands there is more work to do to lower costs for hard-working Americans: that's why he passed legislation to lower prescription drug and energy costs, is working to eliminate hidden junk fees that banks, airlines, and other companies charge to rip off consumers, and is taking on corporate price gouging.

Meanwhile, extreme Congressional Republicans show each day that they don't have a plan to lower costs for families. Their only plan is trillions of dollars of tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans and biggest corporations, saddling taxpayers with more debt. They want to repeal the Inflation Reduction Act try to block this Administration from lowering the costs of insulin and prescription drugs and undo the progress we're making on clean energy. They're still trying to cut Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. And Congressional Republicans attack freedoms like the right to choose, right to vote, and right to love who you love and be who you are — an ideology out of step with most Americans that treasure their individual liberties.

**As the year comes to an end, we look back at the administration's record of working to bring down costs, grow our economy, and fight for freedoms:**

**Lowering Prescription Drug and Health Care Costs:**

- Passed legislation to help 15 million Americans save \$800 per year on health insurance.
- Capped the cost of insulin at \$35 for seniors, made recommended vaccines free, and is requiring drug companies to pay rebates to Medicare if they raise prices faster than inflation.
- Took on Big Pharma to finally allow Medicare to negotiate for lower prescription drug prices — starting with ten of the costliest, most widely used drugs used to treat blood clots, cancers, arthritis, diabetes and more.

- Cracked down on surprise medical bills, preventing 1 million Americans from receiving surprise medical bills every month.
- Led by Vice President Harris, urged states to expand Medicaid postpartum coverage from two months to 12. As of last week, 42 states have done so.

### **Tackling Inflation and Cracking Down on Junk Fees:**

- Inflation spurred by the pandemic has fallen 65% since last summer.
- Gas prices are down more than \$1.90 from their peak, and grocery inflation is at its lowest level in two years.
- Cracked down on hidden junk fees in airline tickets, banking, investment advice, health insurance, and apartment rentals, saving Americans billions of dollars per year.
- Pushed banks to reduce overdraft and bounced check fees, saving consumers more than \$5 billion a year.
- Helped over 22 million households save more than \$500 million per month on internet bills.

### **Tackling the Climate Crisis, Lowering Energy Costs, and Protecting the Environment:**

- Signed the largest investment in climate action ever with the Inflation Reduction Act — which has created 210,000 new clean energy jobs in the last year alone.
- Helped secure a historic, international agreement at COP28 to transition away from fossil fuels, triple renewable energy globally by 2030, and more.
- Spurred hundreds of billions of dollars in private sector investment — in wind, solar, electric vehicles, and more — through the Inflation Reduction Act that will create jobs and help families save an average of \$500 per year on energy costs.
- Protected more than 21 million acres of public lands and waters, while making real progress on environmental justice.
- Launched the American Climate Corps to mobilize a new, diverse generation of clean energy, conservation, and resilience workers.
- Took bold executive action to cut emissions across the economy, including strong final standards to reduce methane pollution from oil and gas operations.

### **Investing in America:**

- Signed the largest infrastructure bill since the Eisenhower Administration, and already announced \$400 billion for 40,000 infrastructure projects across 4,500 communities.
- Unleashed a manufacturing and clean energy boom — spurring over \$600 billion in private sector investments since taking office, including more than \$160 billion announced investments in battery and EV supply chains.
- Invested over \$250 billion to improve transportation all across the country — from better roads and bridges, to improved airports, to more reliable public transit and rail service.
- Announced \$40 billion in funding to states and territories to build affordable, reliable high-speed Internet infrastructure.
- Signed the CHIPS and Science Act to strengthen U.S. supply chains, drive American competitiveness and create jobs.
- Investing in rural communities to improve access to clean drinking water, reliable electricity, and high-speed Internet.

### **Protecting Access to Reproductive Health Care:**

- Signed Executive Orders to protect access to abortion, contraception, and the right to travel across state lines to access care in the wake of the Supreme Court decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.
- Vice President Harris mobilized more than 15,000 students in the fight for fundamental freedoms and rights — including reproductive freedom — while on her nationwide “Fight for Our Freedoms College Tour.”
- Helped ensure that women receive the medical care they need in an emergency, including miscarriages, and can access affordable, high-quality contraception.
- Strengthened privacy protections for patients and doctors, and defending in court women’s ability to access medication abortion.
- Continue to call on Congress to pass legislation restoring the protections of *Roe v. Wade*.

### **Creating Jobs and Raising Wages:**

- Jumpstarted an economic recovery and created over 14 million jobs, including nearly 800,000 manufacturing jobs — while unemployment has stayed below 4% for 22 straight months.
- Standing up for unions, collective bargaining, and the dignity of work as the most pro-union president in history.
- Americans have filed a record 14.6 million applications to start new businesses.
- Wages, wealth, and the share of working-age Americans with jobs are all higher than before the pandemic.

### **Unifying the Country:**

- Signed the bipartisan PACT Act, the most significant expansion of veterans’ benefits in over 30 years, to give better health care and benefits to military service members and veterans exposed to toxic burn pits during service.
- Called to end veterans’ homelessness. This year alone, the Administration housed over 35,000 veterans.
- Made historic investments in mental health care, including over \$450 million to launch 988 — the suicide and crisis hotline.

### **Making America Safer from Gun Violence:**

- Took on the gun lobby and passed the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, the first significant gun violence legislation in 30 years, which includes enhanced background checks for buyers under 21, expanded mental health programs, and support for red flag laws keeping guns away from dangerous people.
- Created the first-ever White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention in American history, overseen by Vice President Harris.
- Funded an additional 14,000 school based mental health professionals, a 35% increase nationwide.
- Announced nearly 40 executive actions to keep guns out of dangerous hands and especially dangerous weapons off our streets.

**Making Higher Education More Affordable:**

- Approved over a total of \$127 billion in debt cancellation for 3.6 million Americans through a variety of actions — more than any President in history.
- Launched the most affordable repayment plan ever — the SAVE plan — which will cut undergraduate loan payments in half and prevent student loan balances from growing from runaway interest.
- Helped over 700,000 people access Public Service Loan Forgiveness.
- Invested over \$7 billion in Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

**Strengthening Democracy at Home and Abroad, While Restoring U.S. Leadership:**

- Defending freedom and democracy around the world, and standing up for democracies in Israel, Ukraine, and across the globe.
- Strengthening the NATO Alliance and maintaining allied unity in the face of threats, expanding NATO and winning Congressional support to add Finland and Sweden to the Alliance.
- Strengthening and revitalizing alliances and partnerships around the globe including trips to Southeast Asia by both the President and Vice President and the Vice President's historic trip to Africa.
- Taking action to combat hate which undermines democracy — including by releasing the first-ever national strategy to counter Antisemitism, announcing the development of a national strategy to counter Islamophobia, signing legislation to enhance state and local law enforcement's ability to respond to hate crimes, and signing legislation to make lynching a federal crime.
- Continuing to use his microphone to speak out against discrimination, racism, anti-LGBTQI+ hate, and more — so that all Americans can live freely and without fear of attack or harassment.
- Pushing for stronger voting rights to make sure every American can make their voice heard.

**Confirming Highly Qualified Judges:**

- Fulfilled his promise to nominate highly qualified judges and ensure the nation's courts reflects the diversity of America.
- Appointed the first Black woman to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court, Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson.
- Under the President's leadership, the Senate has confirmed more than 160 life-tenured federal judges.
- Confirmed a record-breaking number of Black, Hispanic, and AANHPI judges.